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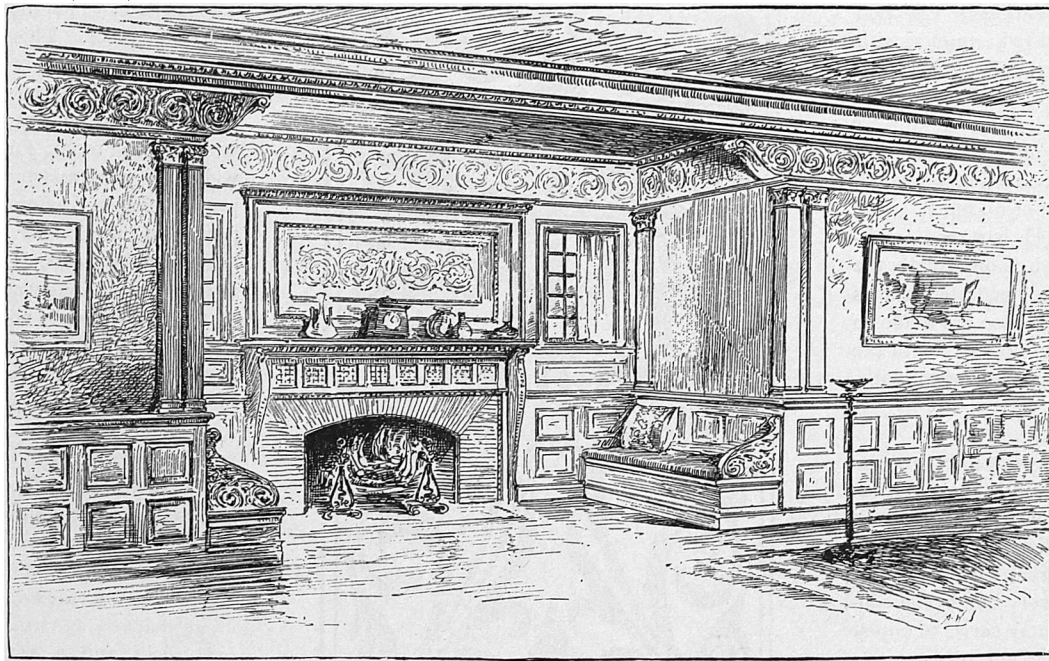
tention from Messrs. Brunner and Tryon, who overflow in suggestions as to its treatment. Corner fireplaces with Queen Anne cupboards, Turkish divans, and all manner of quaint ideas are hinted at in the text and displayed in the drawings. A den in a city residence made in exact imitation of the owner's log cabin in the West is a good example. The walls are of halved logs. The ceiling has a double pitch, and from the rafters hang skins and other spoils of the chase. Coffee sacking, India matting and the corrugated paper unwrapped from wine-bottles are suggested for decorative panels.

Lastly, our authors come to the bedrooms, where, following the doctors, they advise in favor of painted walls, rugs instead of carpets, and few hangings. Stippling or slightly roughening the paint is advised for the sake of richness of texture, and a delicately stencilled frieze may be added at little cost. Among the bedroom illustrations is one of a very pretty washstand, with a background of water-green tiles, with a few fishes darting here and there in a charmingly suggestive way.

THE writer in a New York journal who speaks of the "old carved oak English sideboards" at the rooms of a certain dealer in art objects, should know that they are not "old" and that they are not "English." Our dealers used to import such manufactured "antiques" almost entirely from Chester, where one, Sherritt, still turns them out with amazing celerity, including a liberal

ARTISTIC FRAMING OF PICTURES.

"WHAT do you think should be the object of a picture-frame?" was the question put by a representative of The Art Amateur to a New York frame-maker noted for his good taste in the setting of paintings and prints.



DINING-ROOM WITH RECESSED MANTEL.

"Practically, to preserve the picture from injury; æsthetically, to separate it from surrounding objects, so that the eye and the mind can, for a time, be wholly given to it."

"Do you not believe, then, in decorating the frame with something having a direct reference to the subject of the picture, or helping to carry out its principal lines?"

To give an example which will fit both clauses of my question: suppose a picture of birds perched on a telegraph-wire, and on the flat frame of gilt wood two telegraph-poles carved, with their insulators and the wires attached. Do you not think that such a frame would be appropriate to such a picture?"

"Perhaps. It would depend upon the picture. If it were a good picture, the artist, I should think, would be furious at having it so treated. Even if a bad one, he would be mortified, and with reason!"

"How so?"

"Because the frame-maker would be commenting upon the picture in the most offensive manner. He would be adding to it—changing its composition."

"But surely the frame must have some effect upon the picture?"

"Undoubtedly. It should isolate the picture and thereby increase its effect."

"Nothing more?"

"No more. Every quality of a good frame, so far as it affects the eye, tends to that result."

"But I see here frames in white and gold; others fully gilt, others in wood of the natural colors; some flat, some bevelled, some straight-edged, some curved: are not these varieties meant to

harmonize with the picture and with the room into which it is to go?"

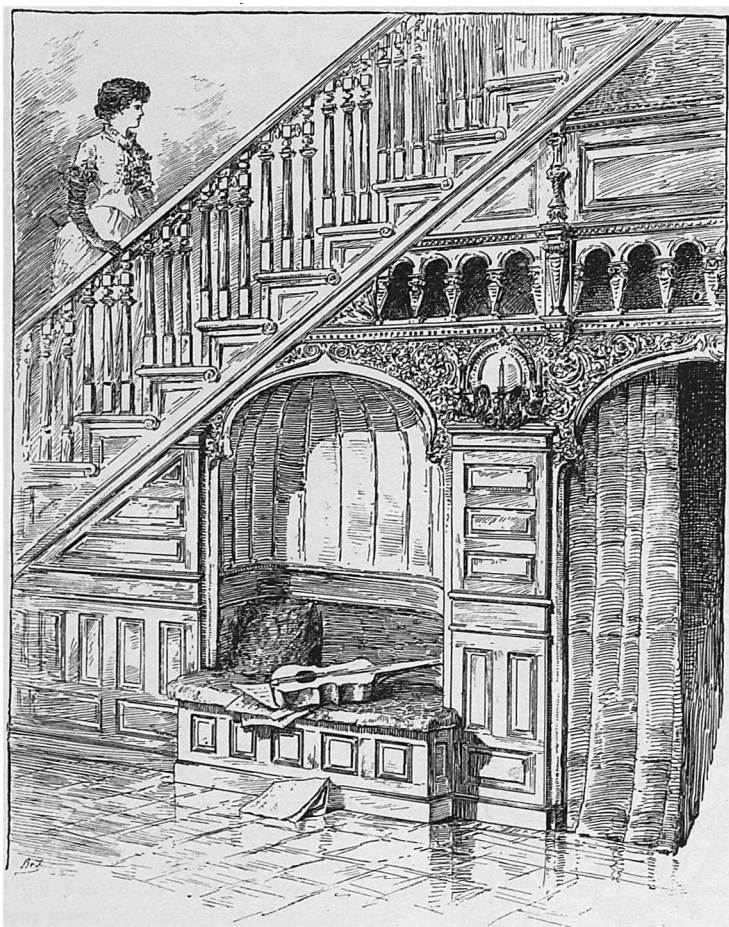
"Yes, to harmonize and, at the same time, to contrast with the picture and with the surroundings. The frame must do both, or else it cannot serve its purpose as a frame. I will explain."

"Many houses are being decorated just now, especially the parlors and drawing-rooms, in very light colors,

in white, or with white predominant. To introduce pictures into such rooms framed in dark wood, or even in heavy gilt frames, would be to draw attention to the frames rather than to the pictures. For the same reason, very dark pictures must be avoided in these rooms. Bright water-colors, etchings, photogravures, framed in white

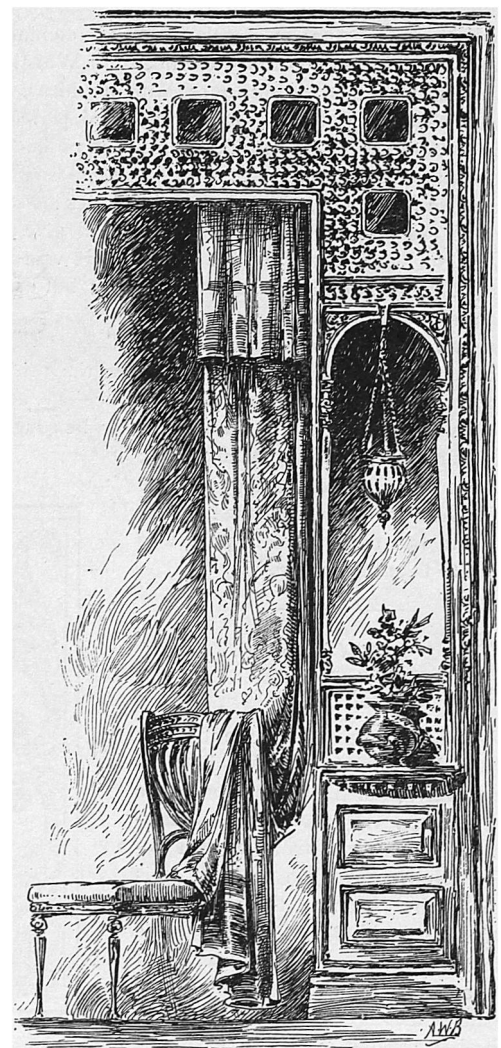
and gold, in the styles of Louis XV. and XVI., and the Directory, are appropriate. Then, for the library, let us say in terra-cotta color or light red, nothing can be much better than the majority of our modern etchings in antique or English oak, or bog oak, accordingly as the ink in which the etching is printed is light or dark brown, or black. We have made many experiments in framing these Braun carbon-types after the old masters, and have found that nothing has so good an effect as this simple, flat, elliptical moulding in rosewood, without any mat, gilding or ornament of any sort. On the other hand, for most oil-paintings and many water-colors, the fully gilt and richly decorated frame is the best.

"A picture strongly painted with a full palette can be relieved by gold only. Any color will be sure to interfere with some color in the picture. And, if the frame is very plain, it will contrast so strongly with the richly composed painting as to attract attention to itself, which it should not do. In the case of prints, a very light frame



TREATMENT OF HALL AND STAIRCASE IN A CITY HOUSE.

supply of worm-holes—made by firing buck-shot into the wood. But now several of them make them themselves in New York, using American instead of English oak, because it lasts better in this climate. As a general rule, the buyer may reasonably suspect—no matter what the salesman may tell him to the contrary—the genuineness of any elaborately carved sideboard offered to him on the representation that it is "an antique."



PORTION OF A SCREEN BETWEEN PARLOR AND DINING-ROOM.

to a very light picture will, in an ordinary room, have the effect of no frame at all. The whole will look like a large white spot. Similarly with a dark picture in a frame equally dark. Then, if conditions are changed, and a very dark picture is put in a very light frame, or

vice versa, the result is even more disagreeable. You cannot see the picture for the frame. The rule must be to secure a pleasing, but not a flat harmony, a sufficient, but not a striking contrast."

"The same holds with regard to the enrichments of a frame?"

"Yes. The festoons and bouquets and knots, carved and gilt on our white frames, would be out of place with oak, or mahogany, or rose-wood. Various enriched mouldings, gilt, or silvered, or bronzed to harmonize with the tone of the wood, or conventional foliage, or other ornaments not in very high relief, and stained to the color of the wood, are used instead."

"I notice some pictures, mostly photogravures and Braun's photographs of old masters, framed in flat wood, with a simple moulding at the edge, but no mat?"

"That is an innovation of ours which has been quickly taken up by others. You see that it is on directly the opposite principle to that on which the decorated frames which you first spoke of are made. Those are made so as to require a second frame; these to do away with the mat, which is practically a second frame—a wheel within a wheel."

"They look very well?"

"So we think. So does everything that fully answers its purpose, and no more. But there are degrees even in so simple a thing as this. This portrait of Dante is for a library. It is to hang near the eye, and where it will be often looked at. The oak frame, while of only ordinary width, is ornamented with very handsome conventional bronze mouldings, which may serve to amuse the eye at times, without giving rise to speculation as to their meaning or as to why they were put there. But this large group of dogs' heads, by De Penne, is for a hall, where it will be looked at only in passing. Consequently, we have given it an oak frame a foot wide, and quite plain; a frame which makes a broad dividing space between the picture and whatever may hang next it on the wall, and which, yet, need not hold the eye to itself for a moment."

"Are the frames on these etchings of Whistler's made according to his directions, or have they been made in accordance with your own ideas?"

"They are the original frames in which the etchings were first shown in London, and were made for Whistler himself; but I think they fully agree with my ideas, as you are pleased to call them. They are, indeed, perfectly fitted to frame Whistler's etchings, in which no line is ever thrown away. As you see, they are composed of small, square mouldings, with a few straight lines incised in them to emphasize the direction merely, and give an appearance of strength without bulk. We have ventured to gild the incised lines in a few of them; but even that, I hardly think, an improvement."

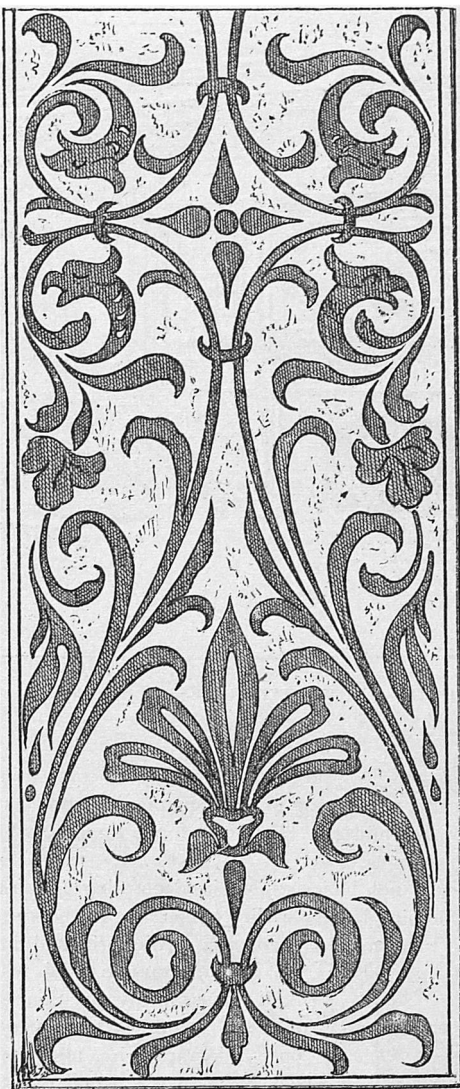
"But Whistler uses both mat and mount?"

"And sacrifices the margin. He thinks the prices paid for margins, in buying old etchings, ridiculous, and does not wish that any of his should one day be sought after because of well-preserved margins; so he cuts them all off, saving only the remark. And then, you know, something of the kind has to be added in the way of a mat to take their place."

A NEW DECORATIVE PICTURE BY LA FARGE.

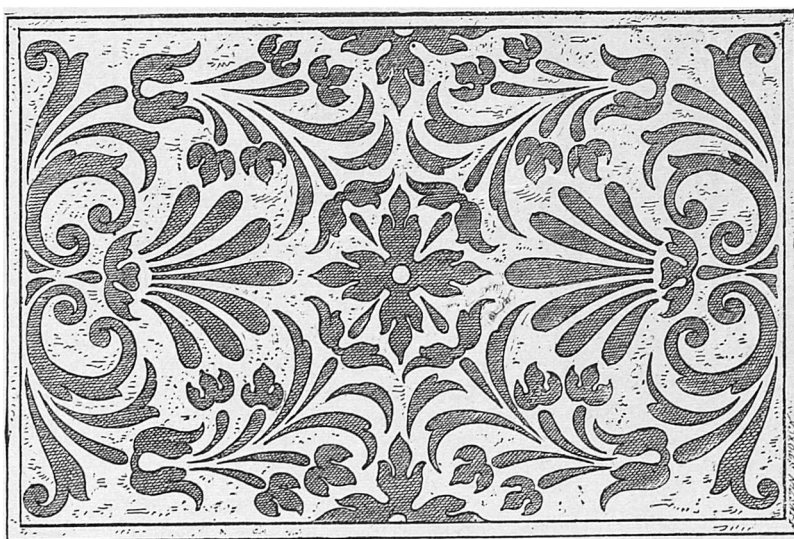
"WHY don't people allow me to paint pictures? I can paint," said Mr. John La Farge naively, after the completion of the picture for Mr. Whitelaw Reid's Music-Room. "No one can realize what a delight it has been to me to paint this picture. It has been all the more a delight that Mr. Reid wisely did not come to see the picture until it was done. Of course a painter is willing to hear all suggestions, and get what ideas he can gather of the wishes of the man who is to possess his work. But after the painter has begun it, nothing the owner can do or say will make it better. On the other hand, he can hamper and confuse and muddle the picture by proffering suggestions to the artist, who may be even more than willing to use them. If Mr. Reid has a good picture, as you say, he has in great measure contributed to it by leaving me to work in the freedom and pleasure with which I painted it." Mr. La Farge's words are

pregnant with good sense. If rich men want good things, let them choose their artist wisely, and leave him alone to justify their choice. The "Villard House," as the magnificent mansion built by Mr. Henry Villard is currently called, has been fully described in *The Art Amateur* as one of the notable houses of this city. At



STENCIL DESIGN FOR PANEL DECORATION.

that time a crisis in the financial affairs of the owner left it just at the point of completion. It has since become the residence of Whitelaw Reid, editor of *The Tribune*, and the work dropped has been resumed in the same spirit in which it had been previously carried on. There have been some changes. The luxurious boudoir and mediæval guest chamber have been made one with



STENCIL DESIGN FOR PANEL DECORATION.

the already spacious library, and a more noble room devoted to the service of the student and man-of-letters is not to be found in this city.

The Music-Room had never been finished. This was a lofty, oblong apartment at the lower end of the hall, opening into the dining-room through doors of old

oak, made beautiful by a Venetian design traced in bronze nails of varying sizes, and giving the impression of a lustrous sheen playing over the surface. The reverse of these doors was white and gold, which is the prevailing note. The room is arched, with a small overhanging gallery for the musicians, and lighted by day by small upper windows on one side, filled in with light amber-toned glass. The walls are panelled high with wood in which flowers and symbols of music are carved in relief. This is all in white picked out with gold, and the ceiling is overlaid with gold.

The angle between the ceiling and end walls above the doors and gallery affords two semicircular spaces, which give room for decorative paintings the full width of the apartment. The space is of noble proportions, and offers fine opportunities for such important decoration as is found in those Italian palaces on which the house is modelled. The commission for these two paintings was given to Mr. La Farge, and one of the hemicycles is now finished. This is not done on the wall, as the Italian would have done it. The New World is on the march, and there is always a possible first of May and moving day. The painting is therefore on canvas on a semicircular stretcher, and can readily be removed in case of need.

The theme is Music. But the thought to characterize it thus is an afterthought. The first impression is a wonderful sense of joyousness; the heart is uplifted, and the world seems still young.

The picture shows a landscape, classic and idyllic, crags backed against leafy groves, streams tumbling over rocks, and a grassy level with sunshine filtering through the leafy boughs of an oak-tree. In its shadow sits a maiden playing on the violoncello. By her side is a kneeling figure holding a book. A little apart is another kneeling maiden holding a book, and singing. Still further on a figure, half-reclining, carries the composition back to the rocks and water. On the other side there is but one figure. She is wrapped from head to foot in saffron-hued drapery, and lies at full length. The folds of the drapery cover but do not hide the long lines of the figure, beautiful in its calm repose. The face rests on one hand. All the figures are of noble types, and the one kneeling by the side of the player is specially charming in its naturalness and grace.

There does not seem to be any prearranged color scheme. Here is a note of blue, there one of red, mingling in unison with the luminous green and gold of a summer afternoon. These notes of color are in the draperies, which have nothing of the conventionalities of nymphs' attire, but disclose the chaste disorder of woodland maids. The feeling that the artist has painted with spontaneity and delight gives a peculiar charm to the work. The companion picture, typifying the Dance, is, as yet, only barely suggested. It will represent a group of women dancing, and will also include a number of figures at rest.

M. G. HUMPHREYS.

LESSONS IN TAPESTRY PAINTING.

III.

A BEGINNER should work from a well-colored copy. An expert can frequently manage with a tracing only. Work done in the manner I have described is very quickly executed, which is desirable, if painting a set of chairs or curtain border and valance, for instance. To those who have had no previous experience in tapestry painting I would strongly recommend commencing with foliage or flowers. It is comparatively easy, and therefore encouraging. It also gives the opportunity of becoming used to the working of the colors and the method of laying them on, or, rather, of scrubbing them in.

Having done this, and being imbued with the spirit of the work, let us proceed to something more ambitious and interesting—namely, a figured subject. This must be selected with a due regard to the fitness of things.

Some of the Christmas cards of Prang and Marcus Ward, enlarged, made charming models. I once saw one of them painted on tapestry by Coleman, from one of his own holiday card designs. The picture, which was mount-